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Message Text

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17
ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 IO-14 NIC-01 SSC-01 DRC-01 /105 W
---------- 063663
R 130605Z APR 74
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4227

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 3547

E.9. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PK
SUBJ: RUMORS OF NEW PAK PRESIDENT

FOLL TEL SENT ACTION ISLAMABAD INFO KARACHI FROM LAHORE
APR 12 REPEATED TO YOU:

QUOTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LAHORE 0562

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PK
SUBJECT: RUMORS OF NEW PAK PRESIDENT

1. FOR THE PAST WEEK, LAHORE HAS BEEN BUZZING WITH RUMORS THAT PRESIDENT FAZAL ELAHI CHOUDHRY WILL SOON STEP DOWN, AND BE REPLACED BY ANOTHER PUNJABI. MANY LAHORE OBSERVERS DISMISS RUMORS AS "GRIST FOR THE IDLE PRESS," OR A PECULIAR MANIFESTATION OF GUJRAT POLITICS. HOWEVER, WE ARE PASSING ALONG WHAT WE HAVE HEARD, IN CASE THERE IS FIRE UNDER ALL THE SMOKE WE HAVE BEEN SEEING.

2. ALL PAPERS APRIL 12 CARRIED APP/PPI STORY DATE-LINED RAWALPNDI LABELING AS "MISCHIEVOUS" SPECULATIVE
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PRESS REPORTS ABOUT A CHANGE IN PRESIDENTS. LAHORE

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EDITION OF PAKISTAN TIMES ALSO SAW FIT TO PRINT STATE-
MENT FROM PUNJAB GOVERNOR NAWAB SADIQ HUSSAIN QURESHI
SAYING "HE HAD NO INFORMATION" THAT HE MIGHT BE NAMED
PRESIDENT. HOWEVER, LAHORE COCKTAIL CIRCUIT HAS FOR PAST
TWO WEEKS PASSED ALONG STORY THAT GOVERNOR PLAYED SIG-
NIFICANT ROLE IN DISMISSAL OF PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER KHAR,
AND, DURING PAST WEEK, HAS BEEN CONDUIT OF SPECULATION
THAT RESULT MIGHT BE PRESIDENCY FOR QURESHI.

3. ARRIVAL OF PAK AMBASSADOR TO UK MUMTAZ DAULTANA LAST
WEEK IMMEDIATELY DREDGED UP STANDARD RUMOR WE HEAR ALMOST EVERY
TIME HE RETURNS: THAT HE WAS BEING OFFERED PRESIDENCY.
LOCAL DAILY JAMHOOR FUELED THIS STORY APRIL 12 WITH STORY
THAT DAULTANA HAD "SPECIAL MEETING" WITH EX-CHIEF MINISTER
KHAR EARLIER THIS WEEK, CLOSELY FOLLOWED BY MEETING WITH
PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO. SHORTLY THEREAFTER, JAMHOOR CON-
TINUED, SOMEWHAT BREATHLESS, SIND CHIEF MINISTER JATOI
SUDDENLY CAME TO TOWN AND CONFERRED WITH BOTH KHAR AND
CHIEF MINISTER RAMAY. (WE ARE SENDING MECON ON JATOI
VISIT IN NEXT CLASSIFIED POUCH.)

4. POLITICS IN PUNJAB ARE CURRENTLY IN FLUID STATE, AND
RUMORS HERE MAY MERELY REFLECT UNSETTLED STATE OF
AFFAIRS, RATHER THAN ANY DEFNITE INFORMATION. PRIME
MINISTER IS DUE TO VISIT LAHORE NEXT WEEK, AND IS EX-
PECTED TO PUT IMPRIMATUR ON ADDITIONAL PUNJAB CABINET
MINISTERS. WHILE SOME OBSERVERS HERE THINK THAT MAY
CLEAR DECKS FOR RESHUFFLES IN ISLAMABAD, NO ONE IS WILLING
TO LAY BETS ON WHAT WILL HAPPEN, WHICH USUALLY MEANS THAT
BHUTTO HAS NOT YET MADE HIS INTENTIONS KNOWN TO PARTY
INTIMATES.

5. THOSE IN LAHORE WHO PREDICT NON-EVENT POINT TO FACT
THAT NO ONE IN LAHORE KNOWS OF ANY REASON THAT BHUTTO
MIGHT BE READY TO BUMP CHOUDHRY; NOR HAS ANYONE HEARD THAT
HE HAS SERIOUS HEALTH PROBLEM, ALTHOUGH MANY OF HIS ACQUAINTANCES
CONTINUE TO COMMENT THAT HE IS OLD AND SOMEWHAT FEEBLE AND
PROBABLY PERFORMS HIS CEREMONIAL FUNCTIONS WITH DIFFICULTY.
GRIFFIN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESIDENT, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS, PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ISLAMA03547
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740086-0161
From: ISLAMABAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740443/aaaabndd.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 AUG 2002 by WorrelSW>; APPROVED <11 FEB 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RUMORS OF NEW PAK PRESIDENT FOLL TEL SENT ACTION ISLAMABAD INFO KARACHI FROM LAHORE
TAGS: PINT, PK, (ELAHI, FAZAL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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